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UNCLAS YEREVAN 002326

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

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TAGS: PGOV PREL PHUM AM

SUBJECT: GENDER AND SALARY DISCRIMINATION IN YEREVAN

Sensitive but Unclassified. Please protect accordingly.

SUMMARY

¶11. (SBU) According to a new survey, equally qualified men and women in Yerevan receive wildly disparate salaries: on average, women in Yerevan receive 40 percent less than men. While the survey was too small to be entirely reliable, the trends it demonstrated are strongly supported by anecdotal evidence. End Summary.

AEPLAC SURVEY RESULTS

¶12. (U) The Armenian-European Policy and Legal Advice Center (AEPLAC) together with the Armenian Sociological Center recently presented the results of a June survey on discrimination trends in the Yerevan labor market. The survey aimed to reveal whether such factors as gender, social status, place of residence and nationality play a role in determining the salary. The survey results are based on limited salary data gathered from only 396 people. The survey contacted 1000 randomly selected respondents, of whom 599 technically belonged to the work force, only 420 respondents were actually employed. Of those who were employed, 396 respondents agreed to share their salary information. According to the survey results, while men in Yerevan receive an average salary of 368.4 Armenian Drams (AMD) per hour (roughly USD 0.72), women receive only 236.0 AMD (roughly USD 0.45). The average proportion of married men in the workforce (84.4 percent of all surveyed men) is higher than that of women (67.7 percent of all surveyed women.) In order to find the reasons for these differences the researchers processed the data through an econometrical model.

EDUCATION AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE SKILLS MATTER

¶13. (U) AEPLAC found that each year of education and a strong knowledge of a foreign language increase the salary by 4.1 percent and 17.6 percent, respectively. Nonetheless, single women in Yerevan are paid 42.3 percent less than single men, while married women are paid 46.9 percent less than married men. AEPLAC cites this as an obvious example of gender discrimination. The location of jobs also influences salary: people working in downtown Yerevan earn 63.5 percent higher salaries than those working in outlying suburbs.

"EXPERTS" IN DENIAL

¶14. (SBU) Gender experts and NGO representatives note that the situation with gender discrimination in Yerevan labor market was complex and varied by sectors; these same experts admit, however, that they had never considered salary discrepancies as discrimination, noting that they had focused their attention on the availability of jobs. The current labor market is so small that professional qualification is the only major criteria, and gender is irrelevant, one of the local experts maintains. This AEPLAC survey, however, demonstrates that gender discrimination exists and is a continuing problem in both the public and private sector.
GODFREY